

20 November 1982

DETA Subject

LIABILITIES, INITIATIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES

OFFICE OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(Random Musings of an Aging, Itinerant Country Lobbyist)

1. Our litany and our legacy should be the quest for excellence.

We should encourage challenge to doctrine - it should be tested constantly in the crucible of changing events and needs. We must constantly fend off tendencies toward parochialism.

Our greatest vulnerability is being satisfied with our efforts.

Our greatest opportunity is to foster the dynamic of leadership. To my mind we are painfully thin in upper middle management and in senior management. We cannot allow this to continue for it stagnates initiative within and endangers the security of our country. Lack of seniority should not hinder advancement; conversely seniority should not be the benchmark for promotion. The personnel process should scrutinize employees at the GS 12-13 level, weaning the less capable and the less dedicated.

Exploring innovative ways to utilize human intelligence should be plumbed constantly. Are we prone to stay with existing methods because it is easy and we are comfortable with the record? Such thinking cultivates mediocrity; it will not satisfy the demands of the times.

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2. Leaks are the single most damaging phenomenon to our endeavors. They give information and solace to our adversaries, destroy well conceived programs, bring disgrace and embarrassment to our friends who provide information, and denigrate our professionalism. They also feed the public perception that Covert Action is our primary activity.

It is time for the President to put a higher priority on coping with this cancer, and for the DCI to take personal charge of motivating the Intelligence Community to establish programs to identify leakers and take action against them.

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3. My view of External Affairs is that we need to fine tune the progress we have made during the past year and that no new initiatives are needed. Our greatest vulnerability is the lack of a seasoned, well trained staff that has experience and continuity. We also lack the kind of political perceptiveness that is required of us in dealing with the Congress, the media and the academic world. We have made strides in this direction as is evidenced by our performance on the Identities Bill, the continuing resolution and in better preparation of speech materials. Our greatest opportunity is to enhance our skills in these areas and achieve some relief from the FOIA during 1983.

4. Specific fine tuning includes the need to:

A. Re-emphasize within the Agency the responsibility of External Affairs to coordinate all contacts with the Hill. Too many independent channels are flowering, making effective coordination virtually impossible and weakening the Agency's ability to respond to Congressional requests with one voice. The legitimacy of independent contact is not questioned, the lack of coordination with External Affairs is.

B. Clarify the role of Public Affairs. We are at present ambivalent about our role viz-a-viz the public and the media. While we operate under the "low visibility" philosophy, public and media interest in the Agency is at a high and can be turned to positive benefit. The dilemma is: do we drag our feet or do we respond aggressively to requests for speakers, requests for information through the mail, etc. The opportunity is to:

(1) Seek opportunities to release unclassified research on such themes as the Soviet Threat, its use of surrogates to project power, international terrorism, the Soviet economy, technology transfer and active measures. (The unclassified paper on technology transfer released last April had an enormous impact and has been and still is being replayed in the media. The release by the JEC of the unclassified Agency paper on the Soviet economy is reflecting positively on the Agency.)

(2) Enlist senior officials other than DCI to "speak out" on these themes.

(3) Reactivate an internal program to educate Agency employees about the role of Public Affairs.

C. Tie the Academic Coordinator closer to the DDI activities with the Academic Community. The Academic Coordinator could make a positive input to the DDI in this area.

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Here is Office of External Affairs input to your request for our comments on Liabilities, Initiatives and Opportunities.

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